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Sighting of Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus* at Girnar

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I visited Narayan Dharo, Bhavnath area, near Junagadh, on 13 December 2021 at around 15:00 hrs. It is a good place of birding in the winter season and I visit this area regularly. On that day, I saw many flycatchers like Asian Brown Flycatcher (*Muscicapa dauurica*), Brown-breasted Flycatcher (*M. muttui*) and Taiga Flycatcher (*Ficedula albicilla*). I also saw many warblers like Western-crowned Warbler (*Phylloscopus occipitalis*), Greenish Warbler (*P. nitidus*) and Hume's Leaf Warbler (*P. humei*). I saw one bird, similar to a Hume's Leaf Warbler, but with two prominent wing bars, pale legs, pale orangish bill base and having white-edged tertials. The plumage was brighter greenish, with some yellow in supercilium, and the median covert wing bar was well defined.

I thought that this was different from a Hume's Leaf Warbler. So, I sent the photographs to Prasad Ganpule, and he



Photo: Gaurang Bagda

confirmed that it was a Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*) based on the strong face pattern, greenish

Yellow-browed Warbler....

upperparts, white underparts, distinct pale yellowish supercilium, white edged tertials, pale legs, pale base of bill and prominent wing bars.

The bird was very shy and came out from the foliage only for a very few seconds. I visited this site three times but could not see it again. But, on 4 February 2022, I saw the same bird there and got good photographs. More photographs of this bird are given in eBird checklists: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S98834372>, <https://ebird.org/checklist/S102000629>.

The Yellow-browed Warbler is a vagrant to Gujarat (Ganpule 2016) and Dr. Anand Patel had photographed a Yellow-browed Warbler at Shoolpaneshwar WLS on 25 December 2015 – see eBird checklist <https://ebird.org/checklist/>

S96386913. As per eBird data, Ashwin Vishwanathan and Esha Munshi recorded the call of this warbler at the Mahal Campsite, in Dangs, on 12 February 2022. It is possible that this warbler is overlooked due to identification difficulties. Birders should be on the look-out for this warbler in well wooded areas of Gujarat. If good photographs are obtained, then identification is easier and call recordings can confirm the identification beyond doubt. It is likely that more records of this species will be made in the coming years.

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Sighting of Long-eared Owl *Asio otus* at Blackbuck National Park, Velavadar

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Harpalsinh Chudasama: Forester, Velavadar National Park: Vishwakarma Society, Nr. Gyanmanjari School.

The Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) is a medium-sized owl, which lives in edges of woodlands, forests and groves. Long-eared Owls are distributed in Europe, western, central, and eastern Asia, North America, Northern Africa, and the northern Indian Subcontinent. This species is a winter visitor to Pakistan and Northwest India. For Gujarat, this species is considered to be a winter vagrant (Ganpule 2016). There are historical records from Kachchh (Ali 1954) and two recent sightings are known from Kachchh; one with photograph from Naliya grasslands (Deomurari 2012) and another is a sight record from Banni (Joshua *et al.* 2006).

A Long-eared Owl was seen and photographed at Blackbuck National Park, Velavadar, on 27 February 2022 by Shrey Mehta along with the authors. The authors and Shrey Mehta were on a safari in the national park and they saw this bird perched on a *Prosopis juliflora*, locally known as *gando-baval*, about five feet from the ground and approximately 20 feet away from the safari road. The nearest wetland is approximately 500-600 mts from this site. The bird was located at around 08:30 hrs and was seen for about five minutes. Shrey Mehta managed to get good photographs of this owl, which helped in confirming the identification. This bird was seen only once in the national park and attempts to relocate it failed.

This is first record of the Long-eared Owl from the Saurashtra region.



Photo: Shrey Mehta